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EXAMINER

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2425

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgement

1. This Office Action is responsive to the arguments filed on December 29, 2008.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed 12/29/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
3. Applicant argues on pages 10+ of the 12/29/2008 Remarks that the claim limitation (1) assigning a unique process identification number (PID) to a frequency band used by each of a plurality of multimedia content providers, as recited in claim 1, (2) simultaneously receiving a plurality of data segments from the plurality of multimedia content providers, wherein the data segments are tracked using the PID assigned to the frequency band used by each multimedia content provider, as recited in claim 1 (3) reconstructing a multimedia asset package transmitted by the multimedia content provider by compiling the plurality of data segments that constitute the multimedia asset package, as recited in claim 1 (4) providing the multimedia asset package to a video-on-demand server that transmits at least a portion of the multimedia asset package to an end user, as recited in claim 1 (5) validating the complete multimedia asset to confirm successful receipt of the complete multimedia asset, as recited in claim 13 and (6) a content management system to receive multimedia asset packages from the receive unit, manage the received multimedia asset packages, and provide the multimedia asset packages to a multimedia server as recited in claim 22.

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4. In response to Applicant's argument, Examiner respectfully disagrees. Gordon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,870) discloses assigning a unique process identification number (PID) to a frequency band used by each of a plurality of multimedia content providers (video 1, video 2, etc.) on col. 2, lines 60-63, fig 2, each multimedia content provider has a unique/different PID associated with it to transport stream and/or transmit multimedia content to a receiver, the frequency band is the channels by which content providers transmit multimedia content to the receiver.

5. Gordon et al. also discloses simultaneously receiving a plurality of data segments (Happy trails, south bank show etc.) from the plurality of multimedia content providers (AMC, BRVO etc.), wherein the data segments are tracked using the PID assigned to the frequency band used by each multimedia content provider on fig. 9, col. 14, lines 20-66, between 8:00-9:00, plurality of data segments (happy trails, south bank show etc.) are simultaneously being received from a plurality of multimedia content providers (AMC, BRVO etc.), it is necessary to provide and track 10 video PIDs to carry the present-time channel/time/title information and the data segments can be tracked using the assigned PID.

6. Rodriquez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) discloses reconstructing a multimedia asset package transmitted by the multimedia content provider by compiling the plurality of data segments that constitute the multimedia asset package (see fig. 4 and paragraphs 0080-0081).

7. Rodriquez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) discloses providing the multimedia asset package to a video-on-demand server that transmits at least a portion

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of the multimedia asset package to an end user (see paragraphs 0041-0042, the ATM switch provides content to the video on demand server and the VOD server transmits the content to the subscriber's location).

8. Rodriquez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) discloses validating the complete multimedia asset to confirm successful receipt of the complete multimedia asset (see paragraph 0054).

9. Rodriquez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) discloses a content management system to receive multimedia asset packages from the receive unit, manage the received multimedia asset packages, and provide the multimedia asset packages to a multimedia server (see paragraph 0036, fig 1).

10. Applicant also argues that the Examiner has not met the initial burden of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness. The Examiner believes to have provided a prima facie case of obviousness by establishing the three basic criteria as follows:

First, the Examiner provided suggestion or motivations to combine the references as discussed below.

Secondly, one of ordinary skill in the art would reasonably expect the combination of Gordon, Rodriquez, Arias, Crocker and Fu to succeed because (i) all systems are directed to a server/headend system.

Thirdly, the Examiner indicated that the prior arts of record teach all the claimed limitations.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. **Claims 1-3, 5, 8, 10-15, 20-22 and 28** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gordon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,870) in view of Rodriguez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623).

Regarding **claim 1**, Gordon et al. discloses a method comprising:

Assigning a unique process identification number (PID) to a frequency band used by each of a plurality of multimedia content providers (video 1, video 2, etc.) (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 2, lines 60-63, fig 2, each multimedia content provider has a unique/different PID associated with it to transport stream and/or transmit multimedia content to a receiver),

simultaneously receiving a plurality of data segments (Happy trails, south bank show etc.) from the plurality of multimedia content providers (AMC, BRVO etc.), wherein the data segments are tracked using the PID assigned to the frequency band used by each multimedia content provider (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9, col. 14, lines 20-66).

However, Gordon et al. fails to specifically disclose reconstructing a multimedia asset package transmitted by the multimedia content provider by compiling the plurality of data segments that constitute the multimedia asset package, and providing the

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multimedia asset package to a video-on-demand server that transmits at least a portion of the multimedia asset package to an end user.

Rodriguez et al. discloses reconstructing a multimedia asset package transmitted by the multimedia content provider by compiling the plurality of data segments that constitute the multimedia asset package ((see fig. 4 and paragraphs 0080-0081)), and providing the multimedia asset package to a video-on-demand server that transmits at least a portion of the multimedia asset package to an end user (see paragraphs 0041-0042, the ATM switch provides content to the video on demand server and the VOD server transmits the content to the subscriber's location).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Rodriguez et al. for the advantage of collecting contents from various content providers.

Regarding **claim 13**, Gordon et al. discloses a method comprising:

assigning a unique process identification number (PID) to each of a plurality of frequency bands used by a plurality of multimedia content providers (video 1, video 2, etc.) (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 2, lines 60-63, fig 2, each multimedia content provider has a unique/different PID associated with it to transport stream and/or transmit multimedia content to a receiver),

receiving a plurality of multimedia data segments from the plurality of multimedia content providers (AMC, BRVO etc.), wherein the multimedia data segments (Happy

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trails, south bank show etc.) are received simultaneously, the multimedia data segments are tracked using the PIDs, and the plurality of multimedia data segments form a complete multimedia asset package (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9, col. 14, lines 20-66),

forming the complete multimedia asset package using the plurality of multimedia data segments (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 8, lines 43-60, col. 9, lines 19-29).

However, Gordon et al. fails to specifically disclose validating the complete multimedia asset to confirm successful receipt of the complete multimedia asset; and providing each complete multimedia asset package to a video-on-demand server that transmits multimedia assets to end users.

Rodriguez et al. discloses validating the complete multimedia asset to confirm successful receipt of the complete multimedia asset (see paragraph 0054) input programming signals such as programming etc. (multimedia assets) from content providers); and

providing each complete multimedia asset package to a video-on-demand server that transmits multimedia assets to end users (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraphs 0038, 0042).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Rodriguez et al. for the advantage of collecting contents from various content providers.

Regarding **claim 22**, Gordon et al. discloses wherein each frequency band used by a multimedia content provider is assigned a unique process identification number (PID), and the catcher receiver tracks the multimedia asset packages using at least the PID assigned to the frequency band used by the multimedia content provider (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 2, lines 60-63, fig 2, each multimedia content provider has a unique/different PID associated with it to transport stream and/or transmit multimedia content to a receiver).

However, Gordon et al. fails to specifically disclose a multimedia catcher receiver, comprising:

a multimedia network interface unit configured to simultaneously receive a plurality of multimedia data segments sent from a plurality of multimedia content providers and to provide the multimedia data segments, a receive unit coupled to the multimedia network interface unit and configured to reconstruct a complete multimedia asset package from a plurality of multimedia data segments transmitted by a multimedia content provider, and to validate the complete multimedia asset package, a content management system configured to receive multimedia asset packages from the receive unit, manage the received multimedia asset packages, and provide the multimedia asset packages to a multimedia server

Rodriquez et al. discloses a multimedia catcher receiver, comprising (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 4):

a multimedia network interface unit configured to simultaneously receive a plurality of multimedia data segments (signals-video, audio and/or data) sent from a plurality of multimedia content providers (paragraph 0020) and to provide the multimedia data segments (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraphs 0020, 0055),

a receive unit coupled to the multimedia network interface unit and configured to reconstruct a complete multimedia asset package from a plurality of multimedia data segments transmitted by a multimedia content provider, and to validate the complete multimedia asset package (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraphs 0080, 0081, 0083, fig 4), and

a content management system configured to receive multimedia asset packages from the receive unit, manage the received multimedia asset packages, and provide the multimedia asset packages to a multimedia server (see paragraph 0036, fig 1).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Rodriguez et al. for the advantage of collecting contents from various content providers.

Regarding **claims 2 and 14**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claims 1 and 13*). Gordon et al. discloses the method wherein simultaneously receiving a plurality of data segments comprises receiving at least three data segments (fig 9, Oprah Winfrey, Happy Trails: Roy Rogers, South Bank Show) simultaneously (all three data segments received by 8:00) from

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different multimedia content providers (ABC, AMC, BRVO) (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9).

Regarding **claim 3**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 1*). Gordon et al. discloses the method wherein simultaneously receiving a plurality of data segments (fig 9, Oprah Winfrey, Happy Trails: Roy Rogers, South Bank Show) comprises simultaneously (all three data segments received by 8:00) receiving the plurality of data segments on different frequency bands (channels 1, 2 and 3) (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9).

Regarding **claim 5**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 1*). Rodriguez et al. discloses the method further comprising:

providing a backchannel connection to each multimedia content provider to enable the multimedia content provider to track the receipt of data segments transmitted by the multimedia content provider (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraphs 0020, 0028).

Regarding **claim 8**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 1*). Rodriguez et al. discloses wherein the reconstructing the multimedia asset package comprises:

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validating the multimedia asset package to confirm successful receipt of the multimedia asset package (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraph 0039, the headend receives (which means successful receipt) input programming signals such as programming etc. (multimedia assets) from content providers).

Regarding **claims 10 and 20**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claims 8 and 13*). Rodriguez et al. discloses wherein validating the multimedia asset package occurs before providing the multimedia asset package to the video-on-demand server (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraphs 0021-0023).

Regarding **claims 11 and 21**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claims 1 and 13*). Rodriguez et al. discloses the method comprising:

receiving a request for the movie file from the multimedia asset package from an end user (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraph 0028, lines 7-10),

comparing metadata associated with the multimedia asset package with validation logic and business rules restricting the use of the movie file (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraph 0028, lines 10-15), and

providing the movie file to the end user if the metadata complies with the validation logic and business rules (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraph 0028, lines 20-27).

Regarding **claim 12**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 1*). Rodriguez et al. discloses the method comprising:

enabling a user to determine an order in which the multimedia asset packages are provided to the video-on-demand server (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraph 0075).

Regarding **claim 15**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 13*). Gordon et al. discloses the method wherein receiving the plurality of multimedia data segments (fig 9, Oprah Winfrey, Happy Trails: Roy Rogers, South Bank Show) comprises simultaneously (all three data segments received by 8:00) receiving the plurality of multimedia data segments from different multimedia content providers (ABC, AMC, BRVO) on different frequency bands (channels 1, 2 and 3), and the multimedia data segments for a complete multimedia asset package transmitted by a particular multimedia content provider are transmitted on a common frequency band (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9).

Regarding **claim 28**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 22*). Rodriguez et al. discloses an asset receive unit (DHCT, 14) coupled to the receive unit and to the content management system, and capable of processing multimedia asset packages from the receive unit and

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multimedia asset packages received from a local source (see cited portion, but not limited to paragraphs 0032, 0033).

13. **Claims 6, 7, 9, 17-19, 26 and 27** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gordon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,870) and Rodriguez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) as applied to *claims 5, 8, 13 and 22* above, and further in view of Arias et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,118,976).

Regarding **claim 6**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 5*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose the method further comprising: providing acknowledgements of receipt of a multimedia asset package to the multimedia content provider using the backchannel connection.

Arias et al. discloses the method further comprising: providing acknowledgements of receipt of a multimedia asset package to the multimedia content provider using the backchannel connection (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 7, lines 4-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Arias et al. for the advantage of confirming receipt of the content provided.

Regarding **claim 7**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 5*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose the method wherein the backchannel connection is a network connection chosen from the group consisting of an internet connection, a public switched telephone network (PSTN) connection, and a virtual private network (VPN) connection.

Arias et al. discloses the method wherein the backchannel connection is a network connection chosen from the group consisting of an internet connection, a public switched telephone network (PSTN) connection (PSTN lines, fig 1 (40)), and a virtual private network (VPN) connection (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 12, lines 34-50).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Arias et al. for the advantage of providing friendly communication environment.

Regarding **claims 9 and 19**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claims 8 and 13*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose receiving metadata that accompanies the data segments of the multimedia asset package, and analyzing the metadata to determine whether the complete multimedia asset package is received.

Arias et al. discloses receiving metadata that accompanies the data segments of the multimedia asset package (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 7, lines 7-10), and

analyzing the metadata to determine whether the complete multimedia asset package is received (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 7, lines 11-18).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Arias et al. for the advantage of providing friendly communication environment.

Regarding **claim 17**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 13*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose the method further comprising: providing a backchannel connection to each multimedia content provider to provide each multimedia content provider with acknowledgements of either successful or unsuccessful receipt of a complete multimedia asset package.

Arias et al. discloses the method further comprising: providing a backchannel connection to each multimedia content provider to provide each multimedia content provider with acknowledgements of either successful or unsuccessful receipt of a complete multimedia asset package (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 7, lines 4-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Arias et al. for the advantage of confirming receipt of the content provided.

Regarding **claim 18**, Gordon et al., Rodriguez et al. and Arias et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 17*). Arias et al. discloses the method wherein the backchannel connection is a network connection chosen from the group consisting of an internet connection, a public switched telephone network (PSTN) connection (PSTN lines, fig 1 (40)), and a virtual private network (VPN) connection (*see cited portion, but not limited to col. 12, lines 34-50*).

Regarding **claim 26**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 22*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose the multimedia catcher receiver wherein the receive unit comprises a backchannel network to provide a communication pathway between the multimedia catcher receiver and the plurality of multimedia content providers to provide acknowledgements of successful receipt of multimedia asset packages to the multimedia content providers.

Arias et al. discloses the multimedia catcher receiver wherein the receive unit comprises a backchannel network to provide a communication pathway between the multimedia catcher receiver and the plurality of multimedia content providers to provide

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acknowledgements of successful receipt of multimedia asset packages to the multimedia content providers (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 7, lines 4-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Arias et al. for the advantage of confirming receipt of the content provided.

Regarding **claim 27**, Gordon et al., Rodriguez et al. and Arias et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 26*). Arias et al. discloses the multimedia catcher receiver wherein the backchannel network is a network connection chosen from the group consisting of an internet connection, a public switched telephone network (PSTN) connection (PSTN lines, fig 1 (40)), and a virtual private network (VPN) connection (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 12, lines 34-50).

14. **Claims 4, 16 and 23-25** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gordon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,870) and Rodriguez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) as applied to *claims 1, 13 and 22* above, and further in view of Crocker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,065,779).

Regarding **claim 4**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 1*). Gordon et al. discloses the method wherein simultaneously receiving a plurality of data segments comprises receiving data

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segments from each multimedia content provider (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9).

However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose using a separate data receiver card for each frequency band used by each content provider.

Crocker et al. discloses using a separate data receiver card (line card A, line card B) for each frequency band (fu1-fu12 etc.) used by each content provider (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 11, lines 27-47, fig 3B).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Crocker et al. for the advantage of identifying content source.

Regarding **claim 16**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 13*). Gordon et al. discloses the method wherein receiving the plurality of multimedia data segments (fig 9, Oprah Winfrey, Happy Trails: Roy Rogers, South Bank Show) comprises receiving the multimedia data segments from different multimedia content providers (ABC, AMC, BRVO) (see cited portion, but not limited to fig 9).

However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose using a separate data receiver card for each different frequency band used by the content providers.

Crocker et al. discloses using a separate data receiver card (line card A, line card B) for each frequency band (fu1-fu12 etc.) used by each content provider (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 11, lines 27-47, fig 3B).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Crocker et al. for the advantage of identifying content source.

Regarding **claim 23**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 22*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose wherein the multimedia network interface unit comprises a plurality of data receiver cards configured to receive satellite transmissions.

Crocker et al. discloses wherein the multimedia network interface unit comprises a plurality of data receiver cards configured to receive satellite transmissions (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 24, lines 10-15).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Crocker et al. for the advantage of identifying content source.

Regarding **claim 24**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 22*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.

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fail to specifically disclose wherein the multimedia network interface unit comprises a plurality of data receiver cards configured to receive satellite transmissions and a network interface card configured to receive terrestrial transmissions.

Crocker et al. discloses wherein the multimedia network interface unit comprises a plurality of data receiver cards configured to receive satellite transmissions and a network interface card configured to receive terrestrial transmissions (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 11, lines 27-47, col. 24, lines 10-15).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Crocker et al. for the advantage of identifying content source.

Regarding **claim 25**, Gordon et al., Rodriguez et al. and Crocker et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (*see claim 22*). Crocker et al. discloses wherein the network interface card comprises an ethernet card (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 22, lines 16-23).

15. **Claim 29** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gordon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,870) and Rodriguez et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0059623) as applied to *claim 28* above, and further in view of Fu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,882,793).

Regarding **claim 29**, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. discloses everything claimed as applied above (see *claim 24*). However, Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al. fail to specifically disclose wherein the asset receive unit comprises at least one data input unit taken from the group consisting of a DVD-based drive and a FTP server interface.

Fu et al. discloses wherein the asset receive unit comprises at least one data input unit taken from the group consisting of a DVD-based drive and a FTP server interface (see cited portion, but not limited to col. 4, lines 63-col. 5, lines 3).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Gordon et al. and Rodriguez et al.'s invention with the above mentioned limitation as taught by Fu et al. for the advantage of receiving content from different devices.

Conclusion

16. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nnenna N. Ekpo whose telephone number is 571-270-1663. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 7:30 AM-5:00 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Pendleton can be reached on 571-272-7527. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Nnenna N. Ekpo/
March 26, 2009
Patent Examiner

/Brian T. Pendleton/

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Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2425